(c) if not, the number thereof and reasons for not appointing them on compassionate ground; and

(d) what is the policy and guidelines in this regard and whether monitoring is being done to ensure that families of deceased employees do not suffer for long period?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) 94 class IV employees have died in harness since 1995 under the Office of Chief Engineer, Bareilly Zone of HQrs Central Command. Out of these 56 claimants have been.appointed on compassionate grounds in accordance with the policy guidelines on the subject.

The policy guidelines related to appointment on compassionate grounds have been laid down by DOP&T *vide* its O.M. No. 14014 / 6 / 94-Estt(D) dated 9th October, 1998 keeping in view the orders of Hon'bje Supreme Court of India in various cases. Compassionate appointments can be made up to a maximum of 5% of Direct Recruitment vacancies in a recruitment year in Group 'C and 'D' posts only.

Compassionate appointment is not a matter of right. It is meant to help the family of a deceased government servant to tide over the financial crisis due to the sudden demise of Government servant. Accordingly, the deserving applicants are selected by a Board of Officers on the basis of a criteria of awarding marks on various aspects of pecuniary position of the family of a deceased Government servant which, *inter-alia,* include amount of family pension, terminals benefits, property and earnings there from, number of earning members in the family, number of dependent children and number of unmarried daughters etc. All possible efforts are made to offer appointments to the deserving applicants. Directions have been issued to finalize all cases of appointment on compassionate grounds wihin over year.

Indian PoW's in Pakistan

646. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many Indian PoW's are presently in Pakistan;

(b) how long they are being detained in Pakistan;

(c) what are the reasons for such a long detention of these PoWs;

(d) what steps are being taken to get them released; and

(e) when they will be actually released?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) 54 Indian Prisoners of War (PoW's) are believed to be in Pakistani jails. The Government has consistently taken up the issue of their release and repatriation with the Government of Pakistan at all levels. During the Agra Summit on 15.7.2001 also, Prime Minister urged the Pakistani President to take urgent and purposeful action towards the release of these PoW's.

Pakistan has never acknowledged the presence of any PoW in its custody. Following the Agra Summit in July last year, Government of Pakistan reportedly conducted another search for Indian PoW's but again reiterated that there was no Indian PoW in Pakistani jails. Government would continue to take up this issue with the Government of Pakistan.

Setting up of Defence University

647. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a Defence University in the country;

(b) if so, the details and purpose thereof;

(c) whether the location of the University has been finalised if so, the details thereof;

(d) the amount expected to be incurred thereon; and

(e) when it is expected to be s_et up?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e)The issue relating to setting up of a Defence University in the country is under examination by Committee constituted for this purpose by the Government. Among the various terms of reference, the Committee is also to identify the location for setting up of Defence University and the amount of expenditure to be incurred in setting up of the University. No time-frame for its setting up has been fixed as yet.